

REMARKS

This application has been reviewed in light of the Office Action dated November 25, 2005. Claims 10, 20, 30 and 33-53 are presented for examination. Claims 10, 20 and 30 are in independent form. Favorable reconsideration is requested.

Claims 10, 20, 30 and 33-53 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Publication No. 2002-0140748 (Kanaya). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Claim 10 is directed to an inventory management system including a first storage unit, a receiver unit, an instruction unit, a second storage unit and an information unit. The first storage unit is adapted to store inventory information indicating an inventory number of an expendable used in a printer and the a receiver unit is adapted to receive absence information indicating that the inventory number of the expendable is zero or less than a predetermined number. The instruction unit is adapted to provide a delivery instruction for delivery of the expendable and the second storage unit is adapted to store history information indicating a history of the delivery instruction provided by the instruction unit. The information unit is adapted to inform an alarm based on the history information stored in the second storage unit and a new reception of the absence information received by the receiver unit, after the instruction unit provides the delivery instruction.

Kanaya relates to a method of monitoring a residual quantity of ink remaining in an ink reservoir. Kanaya discusses a printer having an ink jet head that ejects ink droplets and an ink reservoir that has a predetermined capacity to store ink. The ink jet head ejects ink droplets to create ink dots on a printing medium to print an image on an image

medium. The printer also includes: (1) a supply condition detection unit that detects an ink supply condition, which affects a supply of ink to the ink jet head; (2) an ink ejecting number counter that counts an ink ejecting number ejected by the ink jet head; and (3) a residual ink quantity monitor that monitors a residual quantity of ink remaining in the ink reservoir by taking into account the ink supply condition detected by the supply condition detection unit, based on the ink ejecting number counted by the ink ejecting number counter and the predetermined capacity of the ink reservoir.

The Office Action cites page 4, paragraph 37 of Kanaya as disclosing the instructing unit of Claim 10. Applicants disagree. The cited passage merely discusses, among other things, that a computer reads a program and carries out the processes discussed above including detection of the ink supply condition, the count of the ink ejection number and the monitor of the residual quantity of ink. However, nothing has been found in Kanaya that would teach or suggest a “an instruction unit, adapted to provide a delivery instruction for delivery of the expendable,” as recited in Claim 10 (emphasis added).

The Office Action cites page 2, paragraph 20 of Kanaya as disclosing the second storage unit of Claim 10. Applicants disagree. The cited passage merely discusses a recording mode which represents the relative number of movements of the ink jet head to the printing medium required to complete one raster line. However, nothing has been found in Kanaya that would teach or suggest “a second storage unit, adapted to store history information indicating a history of the delivery instruction provided by said instruction unit,” as recited in Claim 10.

The Office Action cites page 4, paragraphs 32 - 34 of Kanaya as disclosing the information unit of Claim 10. Applicants disagree. The cited passages merely discuss, among other things, that an alarm may be given when the difference between the cumulative amount of ink ejection and the predetermined capacity of the ink reservoir becomes not greater than a predetermined value. However, nothing has been found in Kanaya that would teach or suggest “an information unit, adapted to inform an alarm based on the history information stored in said second storage unit and a new reception of the absence information received by said receiver unit, after said instruction unit provides the delivery instruction,” as recited in Claim 10.

Accordingly, Applicants submit that Claim 10 is allowable over Kanaya.

A review of the other art of record has failed to reveal anything which, in Applicants’ opinion, would remedy the deficiencies of Kanaya discussed above, as a reference against Claim 10.

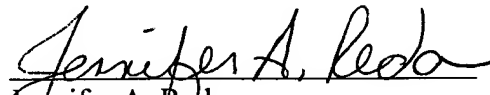
Independent Claims 20 and 30 are method and computer program claims, respectively, corresponding to apparatus Claim 10, and are believed to be patentable over Kanaya for at least the same reasons as discussed above in connection with Claim 10.

The other claims in this application are each dependent from one or another of the independent claims discussed above and are, therefore, believed patentable for the same reasons. Since each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, the individual consideration or reconsideration, as the case may be, of the patentability of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request early and favorable continued examination of the present application.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below listed address.

Respectfully submitted,


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